

Amendments to the Claims

Please cancel Claims 5, 10, 11, 15 and 16 without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein.

Please amend Claims 1, 6, 13 and 14, and add new Claims 17 and 18 to read as follows.

1. (Currently amended) A process for forming images comprising the steps of:

conducting recording on a recording medium provided with an image-receiving layer, the image-receiving layer containing inorganic particles having a diameter of 0.1 to 10 μm for imparting a matted appearance to the surface of the image-receiving layer;

laminating a laminating film supplied from a roll, having a thickness of 2 to 40 μm and ~~comprising only~~ consisting of a thermoplastic resin film composed of two thermoplastic polymer layers without a backing layer onto the image-receiving layer, the glass transition point of one of the polymer layers on the side directly laminated onto the image-receiving layer being lower than that of the other of the polymer layers on the side opposite to the image-receiving layer; and

plasticizing and smoothing the surface of the thermoplastic resin film that is opposite to the surface in contact with the image-receiving layer with heating and

pressurizing means to bond a back side of the thermoplastic resin film onto the image-receiving layer.

2. (Previously presented) A process for forming images as set forth in Claim 1, wherein a surface glossiness of the heating and pressurizing means is equal to or greater than 10% at an incident angle of 20°.

3. (Previously presented) A process for forming images as set forth in Claim 2, wherein the surface glossiness is equal to or greater than 70% at an incident angle of 75°.

4. (Previously presented) A process for forming images as set forth in Claim 1, wherein either a glass transition point of the thermoplastic film is lower than a glass transition point of a binder resin in the image-receiving layer or a film-forming temperature of the thermoplastic film is lower than a film-forming temperature of a binder resin in the image-receiving layer.

Claim 5 (cancelled)

6. (Currently amended) An apparatus for forming images comprising:
an ink-jet head for recording on a recording medium;

a laminate section for laminating a laminating film supplied from a roll, having a thickness of 2 to 40 μm and ~~comprised~~ consisting of only a thermoplastic resin film composed of two thermoplastic polymer layers without a backing layer onto the recording medium on which recording has been conducted, the glass transition point of one of the polymer layers on the side of the recording medium being lower than that of the other of the polymer layers on the side opposite to the recording medium; and

heating and pressurizing means for plasticizing and smoothing the thermoplastic resin film by heating and pressurizing and bonding a back side of the thermoplastic resin film onto an image-receiving layer of the recording medium,

wherein the surface roughness (Ra) of the surface of said heating and pressurizing means that comes into contact with the thermoplastic resin film is 3 μm or less.

7. (Previously presented) An apparatus as set forth in claim 6, wherein the surface, which comes into contact with the thermoplastic film, of said heating and pressurizing means is of a rubber material.

8. (Previously presented) An apparatus as set forth in claim 6, wherein the surface, which comes into contact with the thermoplastic film, of said heating and pressurizing means is of a silicon rubber.

Claims 9-11 (cancelled)

12. (Previously presented) A process for forming images as set forth in Claim 1, wherein said laminating step and said plasticizing and smoothing step are conducted at the same time.

13. (Currently amended) A process for forming images as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the surface, which comes into contact with the thermoplastic resin film, of the heating and pressurizing means is of a rubber material.

14. (Currently amended) A process for forming images as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the surface, which comes into contact with the thermoplastic resin film, of the heating and pressurizing means is of a silicon rubber.

Claims 15 and 16 (cancelled)

17. (New) A process for forming images as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the surface roughness (Ra) of the surface of the heating and pressurizing means that comes into contact with the thermoplastic resin film is 3 μm or less.

18. (New) A process for forming images as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the thermoplastic resin film is composed of a layer of vinyl chloride-vinyl acetate copolymer on the side directly laminated onto the image-receiving layer and a layer of an acrylic resin on the side opposite to the image-receiving layer.